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Five Hundred an Fourteen

Meg Hurtado

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Five Hundred and Fourteen

I

with your smile awake in mine
with your kiss-teeth making
upon my little ear
as bright a chime as any sunrise,
the world is melismatic

II

there is for each hour
a small panel
in an endless ceiling, a field
that puts Arlington to even further shame.

III

Light is before us all,
smiling like the Trobriander at the
1850-something World's Fair

IV

I woke and said, "do I talk in my sleep? tell the truth" –
there were dreams about
sex with a Bolshevik officer,
in a hospital gift-shop,

V

and I am ill
of being the lizard
with its back to the grim desert
and its ice-clear stomach
unlacing all
to the appraising children behind
their father's sliding-glass door.

VI

to you whose shadow I always read
in the scalloped chill of the rain: Never be silent;
In another life we would not lose the spring,
and there is no other life.

[*Meg Hurtado*]